



What Can Happen With a Half-Baked Plan

By Lt. Jeff Korzatkowski,
VAW-117

It was late June, and a friend of mine needed help re-tiling the roof on his house. Shipmates and I decided to help. He got all the materials: ladders, tiles, nails, a pneumatic nail gun, and beer. The plan was to finish tiling the roof by early afternoon, then celebrate with a couple of beers.

We were smart enough not to drink before getting on the roof. However, we weren't smart enough to use a safety harness or rigging to keep us from falling off the roof.

About two hours into the job, we all got thirsty, so one of the guys went into the house and came back out 15 minutes later with a six-pack of Cokes. He was passing out the drinks when he slipped on a loose tile and started sliding down the roof. He thankfully caught himself before he got to the edge. We were all a little shaken up by his close call, but once we were sure he was OK, we went back to work.

By the time we were about three-quarters done, we were tired and hungry, but we didn't quit. Instead, we started rushing to finish the job.



Another guy and I would prep and lay the tiles, and two others would follow us, holding and nailing the tiles to the roof. Suddenly, I heard one of the guys scream. In his hurry to get the job done, he had nailed his hand to the roof.

Blood was everywhere when he managed to free his hand. We took him to an emergency room and were relieved to find out he hadn't hit a bone. Doctors treated and released him with no permanent damage, except for a scar.

We learned a couple of lessons that day. We were lucky no one had fallen off the roof because we didn't take any precautions, and, secondly, it doesn't pay to get in a hurry. We talk about these things at every safety stand-down, but we had forgotten about them when we started this home project. We'll apply operational risk management the next time and get the job done safely so we can have a drink instead of taking a trip to the hospital. A

Good Thing the Tines Were Down

By A. J. Breckenridge,
NavPhiBase Little Creek

It was just another routine day at our warehouse until a forklift driver and a van driver got together. The problem started because the driver of



the government van was driving more to the left than the right side of the road. As he approached a curve in the road, he met a forklift coming from the opposite direction.

A head-on collision ensued. Luckily, neither driver was traveling more than 15 mph, and the forklift tines were in the down position. If the tines had been up, or if either driver had been speeding, the van driver could have suffered severe injuries. As it turned out, the van sustained \$3,000 damage to the left front area, and the forklift drove away unscathed.

This mishap showed it pays to follow speed limits and to drive on the right side of the road,

even in a warehouse compound. It also showed that forklift operators, when possible, should keep the tines down—about 4 inches off the ground. **A** *When the author wrote this article, she was assigned to Sewells Point FISC Division.*

We Don't Talk Enough

By AMS2 Paul Winch,
VX-1

"Ouch, you &^%\$*&!" cried my co-worker, Rich. "You drilled my hand."

The 10-inch-by-one-eighth-inch-diameter bit I was using had gone halfway through his hand. The bit was so hot from drilling through 3 inches of fiberglass and 4 inches of mahogany that it cauterized the three-sixteenth-inch-deep hole.

That incident occurred before I joined the Navy. At the time, I was working for a company that made molds from which automobile-body panels were formed.

This night's work hadn't gone smoothly. Rich and I were working on the quarter panel for a Lincoln Continental. The mold for this panel was about 4 feet high by 5 feet long, and it sat on a 3-foot-high table. Rich was on the front side, and I was on the back, where all the drilling was done. The mold was complete, except for a few pieces that we had to screw in place.



After drilling a hole through the mold and about halfway into one of the loose pieces, I drove in a screw with my cordless drill. I was starting a second hole when the loose piece went flying across the room, and Rich cried out in pain.

Two things could have prevented this mishap. First, I should have told Rich what step in the work process I was doing. There's no substitute for com-

munication, whether we're working in the Navy or the civilian world. It's what keeps ships afloat, airplanes aloft, and shipmates alive and well. Second, I should have made sure Rich was holding the loose piece with a wooden block, instead of his bare hand.

We never did finish the mold that night. As for Rich, he has an eighth-inch-diameter scar on his hand to remember me by. **A**

When the author wrote this article, he was assigned to VAQ-142.

Nearly His Last Ride

By J02 Kory M. Deur,
USS Wasp (LHD 1)

An ABFAN had been aboard ship a week when he and three shipmates climbed into a 1997 Jeep Wrangler soft-top. They had to pick up some supplies before their ship got underway. On the return trip, the driver lost control of the vehicle, causing it to roll three or four times and skid 150 feet across a highway on its top.



Navy photo by AN William Last

A passenger in the back seat, the ABFAN said the last time he looked, the speedometer read 85 mph—30 mph over the posted speed limit. The driver was in the far right lane when he switched to the far left lane to pass another vehicle. He made the lane change OK but noticed he was overtaking a van too quickly. In an effort to avoid a collision, he jerked the Jeep to the right, which caused him to lose control. The left, front bumper hit a cement barrier in the middle of the highway, then the Jeep flipped and slid on its side.

The ABFAN (who wasn't wearing a seat belt) had the worst injuries—a cut and bump on his head. Afterward, he admitted he always wears a seat belt when riding in the front seat, but he never thinks about wearing one in the back seat. He's showing his thanks for a second chance by preaching the importance of seat belts to all his shipmates and friends. He knows that most people who aren't strapped in get thrown out—and killed—when a soft-top Jeep flips. **A**

Since writing this article, the author has left the Navy.